

time in history. We will also continue to deepen our partnership with Russia and Ukraine, who play essential roles in the new Europe.

At the NATO Summit in Washington in April 1999, the Allies laid out a roadmap to membership. We are helping aspiring allies intensify their participation in the Partnership for Peace, encouraging them to follow Membership Action Plans to achieve greater interoperability with NATO, and engaging with them in a full set of consultations and cooperative measures. In these ways, aspiring countries are demonstrating their commitment to closer ties with NATO and preparing for possible membership in the Alli-

ance. They are also embracing economic and political reforms as well as defense policies that strengthen their democracies and contribute to peace and security in Europe. We urge them to continue pursuing their Membership Action Plans, the surest path to joining NATO, with even greater dedication in the months ahead.

On this occasion, we thank our Allies, new and old, for working with us to make sure NATO does in the next half century what it has done in the last: unite our strength to deter war and defend our common interests. NATO's door is open to those who will help us do that in the future.

Letter to Congressional Leaders on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran

March 13, 2000

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the national emergency declared with respect to Iran on March 15, 1995, pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) is to continue in effect beyond March 15, 2000, to the *Federal Register* for publication. This emergency is separate from that declared on November 14, 1979, in connection with the Iranian hostage crisis and therefore requires separate renewal of emergency authorities. The last notice of con-

tinuation was published in the *Federal Register* on March 12, 1999.

The factors that led me to declare a national emergency with respect to Iran on March 15, 1995, have not been resolved. The actions and policies of the Government of Iran, including support for international terrorism, its efforts to undermine the Middle East peace process, and its acquisition of weapons of mass destruction and the means to deliver them, continue to threaten the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Albert Gore, Jr., President of the Senate. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Chicago, Illinois

March 13, 2000

Thank you very much. And thank you all for being here. I'm sure the fire marshal is nervous.

[Laughter] You're all packed in here, and I'm very glad to see you.

I want to thank—Jan, thank you for that wonderful, wonderful introduction and for your commitment to handgun safety and to keeping guns out of the hands of criminals and children. Thank you, Senator Durbin. Thank you, Congressman Blagojevich. Thank you, Mayor Rendell and Janice Griffin and Joe Cari.

I want to thank—I asked Phil and Karen Stefani to come up here because we're in their wonderful place. This is the 20th anniversary of the opening of their restaurant. So let's give them a big hand, the Stefanis. Thank you very much. [Applause] They have been wonderful friends to me and to Hillary, and I'm very grateful to them, and I thank them again.

I will be brief, but I want to, first of all, thank you so much for being here and for your contributions. I want to thank the people of Illinois for being so wonderful to me and to Hillary and the Vice President and Tipper, for voting for me overwhelmingly in the '92 primary and giving us your electoral votes in '92 and '96. I thank you for that.

You know, I had a lot of advantages, running for President, in Illinois. I had Hillary. [Laughter] I had wonderful friends here in Chicago. I had David Wilhelm as my campaign chairman. I had served as the chairman of the Lower Mississippi Delta Commission, which included all the counties in southern Illinois, and I'd spent a lot of time there. I was from Arkansas, and there's an enormous number of African-Americans in Chicago from Arkansas, and that was a big help—something which stunned my opponents in '92 when they found out only too late. [Laughter] So I've had a lot of advantages here. And Illinois has been so good to me. Chicago has been so good to me. And I have now Bill Daley, who is making a wonderful Secretary of Commerce and doing you proud every day.

But I want to talk to you tonight about where we go from here and why you came here. I'm grateful that I've had the chance to serve as President, and I'm grateful for those of you who said tonight going through the line you wish I could serve a little more. This is the first election in decades I haven't been a candidate. Most days I'm okay with it. [Laughter]

So I come tonight to say to you, as your President, as a fellow citizen, as somebody who is profoundly grateful for how good you've been to me, we have worked a long time to turn this country around, to get the economy growing, to get the poverty rate down, to get the

welfare rolls down and the crime rate down, to get people coming together and moving forward, to make America a respected force for peace and freedom around the world—several of you talked about my upcoming trip to India and Pakistan tonight.

And this election gives us a chance to build the future of our dreams for our children. It is very important. We have a chance, now, because the unemployment rate's at a 30-year low, because we've got back-to-back surpluses for the first time in 42 years, to give all our children the education they deserve; to provide health insurance for low income working children and their parents; to provide the kind of tax relief that would enable every family to be able to tell their children when they're young, "If you stay in school and do your lessons, no matter how poor we are, you can still go on to college"; to prove that we can grow the economy and improve the environment at the same time; to meet the big challenges out there.

We can get this country out of debt for the first time since 1835. We can save Social Security before the baby boomers retire. I'm the oldest of the baby boomers, and I can tell you that everybody in my generation, the people who I grew up with at home, most of whom have very modest incomes, they're very worried that when we all retire and there are only two people working for every one person on Social Security, that we'll impose a burden on our children and their ability to raise our grandchildren. We can get rid of that burden right now. We can take Social Security out beyond the lifespan of the baby boom generation.

We can lengthen Medicare. We can add a prescription drug benefit, which should have been there all along, so that our seniors who can't afford their medicine will be able to afford it. We can do these things.

And we can make America a safer place. You know, it's amazing to me that I get in these tussles with the NRA. They've been after me for a decade now. [Laughter] You know, I once got a lifetime membership to the NRA—I think it's been revoked now—[laughter]—because I worked with them when they were trying to educate children to go hunting without hurting themselves, when they were trying to help me solve a lot of other problems. But now their main mission in life seems to be to stop any kind of collective action that will help us to

keep guns out of the hands of criminals and children.

You know, we do this in all kinds of other ways. Most of us are safe drivers, but we still don't object to getting a driver's license or having to wear our seatbelts. Most of us are not terrorists, but we don't object to going through those metal detectors at airports. In fact, we kind of like them now because we think they keep us alive—but at some inconvenience, especially if you've got something that jangles in your pants and you keep—you know, your money clip keeps setting it off and you go through four or five—but we do it, right, because it makes us a safer country.

Now, their position is that guns are the only thing that we should impose no inconvenience on the law-abiding majority to protect us from the law-breaking minority or the dangerous people.

They said when we passed the Brady bill, we'd just interfere with hunters' rights and wouldn't get any criminals. There hasn't been a hunter missed a day in the deer woods, but we kept 500,000 felons, fugitives, and stalkers from getting handguns, and a lot of people are alive in this country because of that. And the same with the assault weapons ban.

I really regret that the NRA leader—I guess he was frustrated, and sometimes when you don't have a defense for your position, the best thing to do is just attack your opponent, and that's what he did. But you know, it's pretty hard for me to take somebody saying I really want a certain level of killing in America so I can beat up on the NRA. You can say that on television, but I sat with the mother and the stepfather of that beautiful little 6-year-old girl that was killed in Michigan, and I didn't like that. I went and met with the families that lost their children at Columbine, out in Springfield, Oregon, and Jonesboro, Arkansas; I didn't like that. I've met with a lot of people who died from violence or whose loved ones died from violence. I'm just trying to keep more people alive. And I'm not interested in fighting with anybody, but I'm interested in fighting for this young man's future with his "No Guns" sign here.

And I was thinking today, coming into Chicago, one of the most meaningful days I ever had here was out in one of your neighborhoods, near a rehab unit where we had, I don't know, a half dozen, maybe a dozen people who were

wounded severely by gun violence. And that day there was a Chicago police officer who had done 2 tours in Vietnam and survived them without a scratch and had 11 bullets in his body because he'd been assaulted doing his job as a law enforcement officer.

And the police and the gun safety groups gave me a beautiful plaque, a very heavy plaque with a model of Abraham Lincoln that was the same used for the penny. And it's still in my office in the White House. If you came there, you could see it today. And I keep it to remember all those young people I saw in wheelchairs, paralyzed for life, who shouldn't have been there.

And I say that because there are big stakes here. And there are big differences between what the House and Senate Democrats would do and what their Republican counterparts would do. There are big differences between what Vice President Gore and Governor Bush would do. And I don't feel the need to attack them the way they attack us. I think they actually believe what they say. I just think they're wrong.

And I think that—you know, if we gave the kind of tax cut that the Republicans have embraced, starting with their nominee, we couldn't save Social Security; we couldn't save Medicare; we couldn't invest in education; and we'd start running deficits again. And I think you like it when we pay down the debt and these interest rates are low, and you can buy cars and homes and keep borrowing money and keep this economy going. And we still have the money to invest in schools and education and trying to help people work their way out of poverty.

There are real differences on these gun safety issues. I don't think that anybody ought to sell a handgun without a child safety lock on it. I don't think that we ought to import these big ammunition clips that allow you to convert weapons into assault weapons when we've banned them here at home. And I don't think that we ought to require background checks if you go buy a handgun in a gun store, and then if you show up at a gun show or an urban flea market, you can get out of the background checks. And I think Americans ought to be willing to undergo a certain amount of inconvenience, if they're law-abiding people buying a gun at a gun show or an urban flea market, to wait a day or so until this background check is done. And if it has to be 3 days because the records

aren't there, it's over the weekend, I think that's okay, too. And I don't think people ought to be bellyaching about that. If it saves the life of one child, it is worth it—it is worth it.

So what I want you to do is to tell people these things. If they ask you, why did you go last night, tell them that "I went because this country is in better shape than it was 7 years ago. They had good ideas, and they turned out to be right. I went because, more important, because they've got a better plan for the future."

And the last thing I want to say is this. A week ago yesterday I had one of the great days in my life. I got to go to Selma, Alabama, for the 35th anniversary of the voting rights march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. And I was thinking—I see all these young people here—I was thinking, when I was a young man in college, people were still being killed for the right to vote. Whites and blacks marching together in the South lost their lives so that everybody could vote—in my adult lifetime. And I thought about what a long way we have come since 1965.

In 1964, when I finished high school, we were sad because President Kennedy had been killed, but the country united behind Lyndon Johnson. We thought we would have an economy that would go on forever. We thought we would solve the civil rights problems through the Congress. We thought we would win the cold war without dividing the country. We thought things would be just hunky-dory.

Within a year, people were getting killed at Selma. Within 2 years, we had riots in the street. Within 4 years, Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy were dead, and Lyndon Johnson couldn't run for reelection, and the country was split right down the middle over the war. And within a few months, we had elected a President on a campaign of "us" against "them" called the Silent Majority. Do you remember that? If you weren't in the Silent Majority you were, by definition, in the loud minority. That's what I was in. [Laughter] And we've been "us-ing" and "them-ing" ourselves to death for 30-something years now. [Laughter]

And by the way, that's when we had the longest economic expansion in history until this one. And soon after that election, expansion disappeared. And I say that because it is important that you not let the American people, the people of Illinois, the people of Chicago be casual

about this election. Because 35 years ago, when we had the same sort of economy by those terms in those years, we thought it would just go on forever, and we thought everything was going to be hunky-dory, and the wheels ran off.

And I have waited as an American citizen for 35 years to give our people the chance to build one America and to build the future of our dreams. That's what I've been working for these whole 7 years. I knew we could never get it all done in my term of service, but I knew if we could turn America around, if we could point America in the right direction, if we could keep going and unleash the energies of all of our people, we could actually build one country and deal with these big challenges.

Now, that's what this election is about. It is very important. You cannot assume any good thing that is happening today is on automatic. Martin Luther King said, "Progress does not roll along on the wheels of inevitability. It is brought by people who are willing to work hard, to be coworkers with God."

You have to work. You have to work. You've got a Presidential nominee you can be proud of. You've got a Senator, you've got Members of Congress you can be proud of. This is worth fighting for. When people ask you tomorrow why you were here—don't even wait for them to ask—tell them why you came. [Laughter] Tell them the country's better off than it was 7 years ago. Tell them we've got better ideas for the future. Tell them you have got the chance of a lifetime to build the future of our dreams for our children, and you are determined to do it, and you know that the best way to do it is to support the Democrats in November.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:10 p.m. at Stefani's Restaurant at a dinner for the Women's Leadership Forum and the Saxophone Club. In his remarks, he referred to Representative Janice D. Schakowsky; Edward G. Rendell, general chair, and Joseph A. Cari, Jr., finance chair, Democratic National Committee; Janice Griffin, national chair, Women's Leadership Forum; dinner hosts Phil and Karen Stefani; Wayne LaPierre, executive vice president, National Rifle Association, who appeared March 12 on ABC's "This Week"; Veronica and Michael McQueen, mother

and stepfather of 6-year-old Kayla Rolland, who died after she was shot by 6-year-old classmate

Dedrick Owens in Mount Morris Township, MI; and Gov. George W. Bush of Texas.

Remarks at a Democratic National Committee Dinner in Lincolnwood, Illinois

March 13, 2000

Thank you very much. Mike, I loved that introduction, but it sounds suspiciously like a eulogy, you know? *[Laughter]*

I was in Cleveland today, before I came here, and I reminded the crowd there that the last time I had come to Cleveland was to say goodbye to former Representative Lou Stokes, who was retiring from the Congress. And we went to an elementary school in his district where there were a lot of young AmeriCorps volunteers, like the ones who met me in Chicago tonight when I got off the plane. And they were serving in their communities, helping kids. They were teaching all these kids at this school to learn to read and kind of navigate their way in the world.

And I got down—I started with the oldest kids, and I got down to the 6-year-olds, and I’m shaking hands with all these 6-year-old kids. And this little kid looked way up at me, and he said, “Are you really the President?” *[Laughter]* And I said, “Yes, I am.” He said, “But you’re not dead yet.” *[Laughter]* And I realized that for him, Presidents were George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, and a part of the job description was you had to be deceased. And when people talk about me the way Mike did, I have to pinch myself and say, “I’m still here.” *[Laughter]* But I loved it.

I want to thank Mike and Pat for having us in their beautiful home, and I want to thank them. And Jim, thank you for the work you did on this event tonight. And so many of you have been so good to me and to the Democratic Party. My friend Ed Rendell—I asked him to take this part-time job when he retired as mayor of Philadelphia, and he’s wearing himself out at it. And thank you, Senator Durbin, for being here. Yes, he’s doing a great job. Give him a hand. *[Applause]* I want to thank Lou Weisbach and Joe Cari for the work they’re doing to help our party. And thank you all for coming.

I know we’re going to have a little time for questions when I finish, so I’ll try to be brief. But I want to say a few things. First of all, I am profoundly grateful to the people of Chicago and the people of Illinois for the support that they have given to me and Hillary and Al and Tipper Gore, starting in December of ’91, when I began my campaign here in earnest, through the Democratic primary in ’92, through two great elections and all of Illinois’ electoral votes. And I am very grateful.

Secondly, I want to thank you, those of you, a large number of you in this room, who have already helped my wife in her quest to join Dick Durbin in the U.S. Senate. I thank you for that.

Thirdly, I want to thank Mike Cherry for all those ties. *[Laughter]* That would be—that’s a good reason—if I could run for a third term, I would, just to get 4 more years of ties from Mike Cherry. I was—one wag that works in the White House asked me the other day, he said, “What are you going to do when you’re not President anymore and you’ll have to start buying your own ties? You’ll be bankrupt in no time, you know.” He’s spoiled me.

The second thing I want to say to you is that what Mike said about the progress that our country has made over the last 7 years is very important to me. But it really only matters insofar as it’s evidence of what we can and should do in the future. After all, that’s what you hired me to do. And I ran for President because I thought Washington was off on the wrong track, and they were just up there fighting with each other and divided among themselves, and the way people even talked about issues and politics and real life in Washington bore no relationship to what I had tried to do for many years as Governor of my own State.

So I thank you for that. But the important thing is the future. Some of you heard me tell this story, but I used to go out to the State